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MOSCOW'S ASIAN SECURITY PLAN -- FEW TAKERS

ANNCR:

A SOVIET-SPONSORED COLLECTIVE SECURITY ARRANGEMENT IN ASIA CAME INTO THE NEWS AGAIN LAST WEEK WITH THE VISIT TO JAPAN OF SOVIET FOREIGN ANDREI GROMYKO.....AS WE HEAR IN THIS BACKGROUND REPORT BY VOA'S JOSEPH SULLIVAN.

VOICE:

JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER KIICHI MIYAZAWA DISCLOSED THAT MISTER GROMYKO URGED THE JAPANESE TO HELP FORM AN ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM, AS PROPOSED SOME YEARS AGO BY SOVIET PARTY CHIEF LEONID BREZHNEV. ACCORDING TO MISTER MIYAZAWA, PRIME MINISTER MIKI TOLD THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE PLAN WAS NOT AT ALL APPROPRIATE UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IN ASIA. MISTER MIKI, HE SAID, ALSO QUESTIONED THE FEASIBILITY OF AN ASIAN VERSION OF THE EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE HELD IN HELSINSKI LAST SUMMER. SOVIET OFFICIALS IN RECENT MONTHS HAVE CITED THE SUCCESS OF THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE TO GIVE NEW MOMENTUM TO MOSCOW'S LONG-STANDING CALL FOR AN ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PACT IN WHICH THE SOVIET UNION WOULD EXPECT TO PARTICIPATE AS AN ASIAN POWER.

THE SOVIET SECURITY PLAN HAS BEEN PROPOSED ANEW ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS SINCE IT WAS UNVEILED IN 1969 AT A WORLD CONFERENCE OF COMMUNIST PARTIES. IT WAS THE SUBJECT OF A MAJOR POLICY SPEECH BY LEONID BREZHNEV IN AUGUST 1973 IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN CITY OF ALMA ATA. UNTIL RECENTLY, MOSCOW HAS SAID THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS ASIAN SECURITY PLAN WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT THE END OF THE CONFLICT IN INDOCHINA. BUT LAST OCTOBER, ANDREI GROMYKO WROTE IN THE SOVIET PARTY

JOURNAL, "COMMUNIST," THAT THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVERS IN INDOCHINA HAD LAID A SOUND FOUNDATION FOR A COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM IN ASIA.

THE SOVIET PLAN HAS BEEN RECEIVED COOLY BY MOST ASIAN NATIONS, INCLUDING SOME OF THE SOVIET UNION'S COMMUNIST ALLIES IN ASIA. MOST OBSERVERS AGREE THAT THE LACK OF SUPPORT REPRESENTS IN LARGE PART A RELUCTANCE BY ASIAN GOVERNMENTS TO TAKE SIDES IN THE SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE. INDEED, THE SOVIET SECURITY PLAN IS WIDELY REGARDED AS BEING AIMED AT CHINA. PEKING HAS SOLIDLY MAINTAINED THAT THIS IS SO, AND HAS ACCUSED MOSCOW OF SEEKING, THROUGH THE SOVIET SECURITY PROPOSAL, TO ENCIRCLE CHINA AND EXTEND ITS DOMINANCE OVER ASIA.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE SOVIET SECURITY PLAN CALLS FOR THE INVIOLABILITY OF FRONTIERS IN ASIA. AND THIS WOULD PRESENT OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES TO A NUMBER OF ASIAN COUNTRIES WITH UNRESOLVED BORDER PROBLEMS. IT'S PARTICULARLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE, WHO ARE IN DISPUTE WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON TERRITORIAL CLAIMS. MOSCOW, AS EVIDENT FROM THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ENDING MISTER GROMYKO'S VISIT TO TOKYO LAST WEEK, HAS SHOWN NO SIGNS OF YIELDING TO JAPANESE DEMANDS FOR THE RETURN OF FOUR NORTHERN ISLANDS OCCUPIED BY THE SOVIET UNION SINCE WORLD WAR TWO. AT THE SAME TIME, THE STATUS OF THE SOVIET UNION'S BORDERS WITH CHINA REMAINS UNRESOLVED AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS.

MOSCOW HAS WITHHELD SUPPORT FOR OTHER REGIONAL PACTS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN PEACE AND SECURITY IN ASIA. SOVIET OFFICIALS, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE SOUTH ASIAN PROPOSAL FOR AN INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE, WHICH IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE CONTINUED PRESENCE

OF SOVIET NAVAL VESSELS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. AND THE SOVIET UNION HAS CONSISTENTLY ABSTAINED FROM VOTING ON THE UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD FORMALLY ESTABLISH THE ZONE OF PEACE.

UNTIL RECENTLY, MOSCOW HAD ALSO CRITICIZED THE MALAYSIAN PROPOSAL FOR A NEUTRALIZED SOUTHEAST ASIA. THAT PROPOSAL IS IN THE KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION BY THE FIVE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA NATIONS. BUT SOVIET COMMENTATORS NOW SPEAK OF THAT CONCEPT IN LESS NEGATIVE TONES, AND HAVE EVEN SUGGESTED THAT IT HAS SOMEHOW EVOLVED BECAUSE OF THE SOVIET CALL FOR AN ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM.

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